



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION
UNIT 21420
APO AE 09705-1420

ACDP

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: USANATO Policy Letter 15, Counseling, Coaching, and Mentoring

1. References.

- a. AR 623-105, Officer Evaluation Reporting System, 17 December 2004.
- b. AR 623-205, Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reporting System, 15 May 2002.
- c. AR 690-400, Total Army Performance Evaluation System, 16 October 1998.
- d. FM 22-100, Army Leadership, 31 August 1999.

2. Counseling. Conducting timely and effective performance counseling of subordinates is fundamental to our business and is at the heart of our responsibilities as leaders. I expect military and civilian leaders to conduct one-on-one performance counseling in accordance with the references in paragraph 1. More importantly, I expect performance counseling that clearly defines performance expectations and nurtures the individual performance and professional development of subordinates. Performance counseling must not be limited to a scheduled initial, quarterly, semiannual, or annual session. Leaders counsel throughout the year. The daily investment we make in developing our subordinates is vital to the Army's future.

3. Coaching. Coaching is one of the most effective ways to develop our subordinates. Coaching involves more than performance counseling. It combines formal counseling with informal, but structured, feedback. We must create an environment conducive to personal development. That begins with senior leaders, officers, noncommissioned officers, and civilians who create the organizational climate by their actions. An important part of a positive command climate, coaching includes counseling done for evaluation reports as well as less formal, one-on-one contacts between leaders and their subordinates.

- a. Done properly, coaching concentrates on helping individuals become better leaders by enhancing their appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses. This requires frequent, seemingly spontaneous, informal contact with subordinates. You should combine occasional and well-thought-out informal counseling with more formal performance counseling. Use developmental counseling when future assignments and professional development are up for discussion. Written feedback, both positive and negative, should be provided to every member of our workforce in a clear and timely manner.

This letter is available at <http://www.usanato.army.mil>.

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b. Coaching company-grade officers and newly promoted sergeants requires special emphasis. Young leaders in these positions will face increased demands, challenges, and responsibilities. To ensure these Soldiers succeed early in their tours, we must commit ourselves to a strong, well-developed coaching program. Combine formal, scheduled performance and developmental counseling with frequent informal contacts that provide encouragement. Good coaches spend a great deal of time emphasizing the strengths of their subordinates, helping them recognize their weaknesses, and finding ways to minimize the effect of those weaknesses on the unit.

4. Mentoring. Young leaders value the candor and advice received from mentors and instinctively emulate the positive leadership traits they see in these trusted, "seasoned" leaders. Mentors are not appointed; young leaders choose them. Build relationships based on trust and be personally involved in the professional development of your subordinates. Mentors transcend traditional command channels. Be there to provide advice when times are tough. Help young leaders see their own strengths. Help them plan their future by ensuring that they know which job or school they should strive for. Also help them realize how to use their talents for the benefit of the Army.

5. Summary. Commanders are responsible for preparing our next generation of leaders to move the Army forward. Do this by counseling and teaching subordinates to perform their job in combat. Create, plan, and conduct well-organized events such as staff rides, structured off-sites, after-action reviews, and seminars that teach how to lead in combat. Good unit leaders routinely conduct individual counseling, coaching, and mentoring. These leadership responsibilities are essential in taking care of our people and in preparing the next generation for success.



DAVID D. McKIERNAN
General, USA
Commanding

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